

China Business Weekly

17 June 2025



PAST EVENTS

FCCC SEMINAR: China's Business Landscape: Economic Outlook, Success Stories, and Legal Insights – Indigo on the Bund Hotel – 30 May 2025 – Shanghai



China Innovation Trip

From 25 to 31 May, the Province of West Flanders and the Flanders-China Chamber of Commerce (FCCC) joined forces to organise an innovation mission to China, led by Governor Carl Decaluwé. This visit marked 25 years of collaboration between West Flanders and Zhejiang Province.

The mission was moderated by Professor Rudy Aernoudt, who provided expert economic insights throughout the journey. The FCCC was represented by Philippe Latour, Chairman and Gwenn Sonck, Executive Director. More than 40 participants from the business and education sectors took part in this eye-opening mission. The Consul General of Belgium in Shanghai, Mr Pascal Buffin and Mr Frank Van Eynde, Flemish Economic Trade Commissioner FIT Shanghai, joined several activities of this innovation trip. The trip began in Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang Province, known as a hub of innovation and home to several of China's most prominent unicorns. We visited a wide range of pioneering companies, including:

- **Unitree Robotics** – Developer of advanced quadruped robots used in logistics, public safety, and industry
- **Alibaba Group** – Global leader in e-commerce, cloud computing, and digital infrastructure
- **Dahua Technology** – Expert in smart surveillance and security systems
- **Robam Appliances** – Innovator in smart kitchen automation, showcasing “dark factory” manufacturing

The trip delegation then continued to Shanghai with visits to NIO (smart electric vehicles and innovative battery services) and Pony a.i. (autonomous driving).

FCCC Seminar in Shanghai 30 May 2025

On 30 May, the FCCC organized an engaging seminar in Shanghai on China's business landscape and the opportunities it presents for Flemish companies.

The event began with opening remarks by Gwenn Sonck, Executive Director of the Flanders-China Chamber of Commerce. She set the tone for the day by introducing the central theme and underscoring China's accelerating focus on innovation, pointing to the valuable opportunities this presents for Flemish enterprises.

The first speaker, Frank Van Eynde, Flemish Economic Trade Commissioner in Shanghai, provided an overview of the role of Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT) and the services it offers to support the internationalization of Flemish companies, as well as its assistance to foreign businesses interested in investing in Flanders. He also offered insights into the Yangtze River Delta, the economic and innovative engine of China, and outlined key opportunities for Flemish companies. His presentation covered economic trends in the region, areas with high growth potential, and practical tips on doing business in China.

Next, Carmen Guo, General Manager of KBC Bank Shanghai, delivered a presentation on China's economic outlook and the opportunities available for Belgian companies. She focused on macroeconomic developments, regulatory changes, and the strategic advantages of operating in China.

Following this, Kurt Van Rijsselberghe, Head of Bekaert China, shared Bekaert's experience in China, offering a practical perspective on the company's journey, challenges faced, and successful strategies for navigating the Chinese market.

The session continued with Mr. Philippe Snel, Founder and Lawyer at Dawo Law Firm Shanghai and Board Member of the Benelux Chamber of Commerce. He delivered an in-depth presentation on the business and legal landscape for foreign companies in China, highlighting key regulatory considerations and offering legal advice based on his extensive experience in the region. His message: *"This is a great time to consider doing business in or with China—and probably the best time in the past 20 years to invest in China!"*

The presentations concluded with a Q&A session, during which participants actively engaged with the speakers, asking questions and sharing their experiences.

The event ended with closing remarks by Prof. Rudy Aernoudt of Ghent University, who summarized the key takeaways of the day and encouraged companies to embrace innovation.

FCCC/EUCBA ACTIVITIES

Webinar: European Business in China 2025: Business Confidence Survey 2025 25 June 2025 – 10 AM CEST



The EU-China Business Association is organizing an exclusive webinar on the key findings of the **European Union Chamber of Commerce in China's Business Confidence Survey (BCS) 2025**.

During this webinar, you will gain insights into how European businesses are adapting to a rapidly changing business environment in China.

Global trade tensions, price deflation, razor-thin margins, low domestic consumption, and a weakening global economy have all increased business uncertainty. These challenges have led many European Chamber members to revise their growth and profitability forecasts.

This session will provide an overview of the current landscape for EU businesses in China and explore how they are

adjusting their strategies in response.

Programme:

10:00–10:05 | Introduction by **Gwenn Sonck, Executive Director, EU-China Business Association**

10:05–10:35 | Key Insights from the Business Confidence Survey 2025 by **Robert Jarvis, Policy and Communications Manager, European Chamber**

10:35–10:55 | Q&A Session

10:55–11:00 | Closing by **Jochum Haakma, Chairman, EU-China Business Association**

We look forward to your participation in this timely and important discussion.

Practical information:

Date: 25 June 2025

Time: 10 AM - CEST

Location: Online

Price members: FREE (registration required)

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Webinar: Enforcement of IP in China – Tuesday, July 1, 2025 at 10 AM CEST

CHINA
IP SME HELPDESK

CHINA
FCCC
EU-CHINA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

EU-China
Business Assoc
欧洲-中国商务协会

Webinar

Enforcement of IP in China

Tuesday, July 1st 2025
10 AM (CEST) / 4 PM (Beijing time)



The Flanders-China Chamber of Commerce, the EU-China Business Association and the China IP SME Helpdesk are organizing an exclusive webinar focused on the **Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights in China**. This event will take place on **1 July 2025 at 10:00 AM CEST**.

During this session, **Mr. Toby Mak, IP expert of the China IP SME Helpdesk**, will provide participants with practical insights into the various enforcement mechanisms available to SMEs facing intellectual property infringement in China.

The webinar will walk attendees through the process of enforcing IP rights in a Chinese court. It will address key areas such as administrative actions, civil litigation, criminal sanctions, and other alternative enforcement methods.

This session is particularly important for SMEs aiming to safeguard their intellectual property in the Chinese market and take appropriate legal action when confronted with infringement.

The programme is as follows:

10h00-10h05: Introduction of **the China IP SME Helpdesk** – **Ms. Alessandra Capriglia, Project Manager**

10h05-10h15: Introduction of the **Flanders-China Chamber of Commerce and the EU-China Business Association** – **Ms. Gwenn Sonck, Executive Director**

10h15-10h50: Enforcement of IP in China – **Mr. Toby Mak, IP expert of the China IP SME Helpdesk**

10h50-11h00: Q&A session

Practical information:

Date: 1 July 2025

Time: 10 AM – CEST

Location: Online

Price members: FREE (registration required)

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ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY FCCC

The Third China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) – 16-22 July 2025 – Beijing



中国国际供应链促进博览会

China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE)

The China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE), as the world's first state-level expo focusing on the supply chain, is a global public good shared by the whole world. The third CISCE is scheduled to be held in Beijing from July 16 to 20, 2025, with a total area of 120,000 square meters and six major chains which include advanced manufacturing, clean energy, smart vehicles, digital technology, the healthy life, and the green agricultural chain, and one supply chain service exhibition area. Up to now, nearly 200 companies have signed up to participate in the third CISCE. We welcome the active participation of Chinese and foreign enterprises.

Since 2023, the CISCE has been successfully held for two editions, becoming a global economic and trade event with distinctive exhibition features, diverse activities and fruitful cooperation, and making positive contributions to the construction of a more secure, stable, open and inclusive global industrial and supply chain.

Venue: China International Exhibition Center Shunyi, Beijing - Contact: 010-84600162

REGISTER NOW: 5th Innovation Fair – Nanjing – September 16-18, 2025



The **EU-China Business Association (EUCBA)** is proud to be a supporting organization of the **5th Innovation Fair in Nanjing**.

Building on the success of previous editions, the 5th Innovation Fair is scheduled to take place from 16-18th September 2025. The fair promotes international business development, uncovers sourcing opportunities, and provides access to the Chinese market while allowing for opportunities for representation and distribution of Chinese businesses in Europe. Based on your specific requirements, our team in China will book relevant counterpart meetings for you.

This initiative is designed for companies and research institutes from Europe looking to develop business activities in China.

Industries include, but are not limited to:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- New Energy
- Artificial Intelligence
- Low Altitude Flight Technology
- Environmental Technology
- Fintech
- Pharma & Medtech
- Food & Beverage
- Fashion & Beauty Products
- Innovation Services

If your organization operates in any of these sectors and seeks partnerships or market entry in China, this event offers a tailored platform to connect and grow.

Based on your specific business interests, our team in China will arrange targeted B2B meetings with relevant counterparts to ensure a valuable and productive experience.

Benefits & Cost of Participation

Covered Costs

- 1x Economy Class Roundtrip Ticket
- Hotel and meals throughout the event

Services Provided

- Matchmaking Space (Booth)
- Speaking Opportunity
- Personalized Matchmaking Service

Registration Fees per Participant

- **Standard Rate:** €980 (from 17 May to 17 July)

- **Late Registration:** €1280 (from 18 July to 18 August)

Payment instructions will be sent via email after we confirm your registration.

If you are interested in taking part in the Innovation Fair then email us at: gwenn.sonck@flanders-china.be

Introduction to the ICBC booth at the 8th China International Import Expo (CIIE) November 5-10, 2025 – Shanghai



Join us at the **8th China International Import Expo on November 5 – 10, 2025 – Shanghai, China** where ICBC will showcase its **Signature Booth**, organized under a financial institution-led exhibition model.

ICBC has a pleasure to offer a **Free Booth for FCCC members at the Expo**.

Exhibition Area: **Food and Agricultural Products**

Since 2021, ICBC's booth has welcomed over **430 international** exhibitor participation from **60+ countries**, hosted **50+ matchmaking events**, and supported **60+ product launches**, playing a key role in advancing global trade cooperation.

This year's ICBC booth will feature a 1,200 m² space including:

- Product Display Area
- Business Negotiation Area
- Event & Financial Services Zones
- VIP Lounge
- Live Streaming Area
- Newly added Buyers' Corridor and Key Buyers' Product Selection Area

The Buyers' Corridor will host direct matchmaking opportunities with leading enterprises such as **JD.com**, **Suning.com**, **Bright Food Supply Chain**, and **Greenland Zhongxuan**, all of whom will have dedicated spaces and onsite purchasing representatives.

Exhibitor Invitation Criteria

Our chamber can recommend 5 qualified international food and agricultural enterprises.

- Booth space and design coordinated by ICBC
- Promotional activities (≤50 attendees) may be arranged with advance notice
- All travel and logistics costs are the responsibility of the exhibitors

For registration and further details, please contact: gwenn.sonck@flanders-china.be

PAST EVENTS

Webinar: Setting up your own Manufacturing Facility in China: Trends and Best Practices from Orfit Industries – 17 June 2025



The Flanders-China Chamber of Commerce organized an exclusive webinar focused on **Setting Up Your Own Manufacturing Facility in China** on **17 June 2025**. A detailed report will follow next week.

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FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Sign of global investor confidence: number of FIEs in China up 12.2% y-o-y in first four months



China has become more attractive as a global investment destination, especially in technology and innovation, attracting international businesses with its robust economic growth and creativity, said Rani Jarkas, Chairman of the Swiss Cedrus Group. Having worked in Beijing for over 15 years and conducted business in many cities, Jarkas expressed confidence in China's global growth and innovation. "I think the Chinese economy will grow at a very consistent pace going forward, led by innovation, AI and other technologies," he said. **"China is one of the most important markets for businesspeople around the world,** as investors believe it will continue to open up," Jarkas said, adding that mutual understanding is improving, with investors becoming increasingly aware of the opportunities the Chinese market offers and the returns companies can achieve.

According to the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), as of April 2025, **a total of 18,832 new foreign-invested enterprises (FIEs) had been established nationwide this year, marking a year-on-year increase of 12.1%.** The actual utilized foreign investment amounted to CNY320.78 billion. In the first five months of this year, the number of FIEs engaged in foreign trade exceeded 73,000, the highest during the same period in the past five years, with monthly import and export values maintaining growth for four consecutive months. Jarkas praised the Chinese government for its effective policies and incentives, especially in cities like Beijing. “There are many dimensions to these policies, such as streamlined approvals for new companies and initiatives to attract attention,” he said.

Early this year, the Chinese government introduced the “2025 Action Plan for Stabilizing Foreign Investment” and announced that it will revise the “Catalogue of Industries Encouraged for Foreign Investment”, systematically expanding openings in sectors such as telecommunications, healthcare and education. These measures encourage foreign capital to engage in equity investment in China and facilitate the accelerated implementation of major landmark foreign investment projects. Such policies have further optimized the business environment, bolstered the confidence of foreign enterprises and strengthened their willingness to invest. “We’re very inspired by these policies and believe they will continue to improve over time. We strongly recommend foreign companies explore opportunities in China, invest here and trust the government’s support,” Jarkas added. He made these remarks during the opening ceremony of the **2025 Beijing CBD Forum** on June 11. The event was attended by more than 20 representatives from Asian cities, over 30 representatives from international organizations and business associations of more than 10 core industries, as well as members of the Global Business Districts (GBD) Innovation Club and the China CBD Alliance.

In addition to the improved investment environment, Jarkas highlighted better air quality and living conditions as key factors attracting more foreign businesses to China. Siddharth Chatterjee, UN Resident Coordinator in China, echoed this sentiment, noting that major Chinese cities are serving as models for air quality optimization. Taking Beijing as an example, Chatterjee pointed out that its air quality was once a major concern. “However, today we can see that the air is remarkably clean,” he said, giving a thumbs-up. China has taken bold steps in sustainable development. Its dual carbon goals – to achieve peak carbon emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060 – reflect the nation’s strong commitment to green development.

While environmental improvements have played a crucial role in enhancing China’s attractiveness to foreign businesses, the country’s robust economic policies and investment-friendly environment continue to be key drivers of foreign interest. In a interview with China Daily during the forum, Jarkas encouraged more foreign companies to visit China, learn about its rules and regulations, and experience its warm hospitality and rich culture. He emphasized that such visits would help businesses discover how China can meet their needs and support their growth. Jarkas’ views were echoed by John McLean, Chairman of the City of London Branch of the Institute of Directors UK. McLean noted that the Chinese government’s policy of **extending the visa-free transit period to 240 hours has indirectly encouraged some foreign businesspeople to consider investing in China.** “Although the policy itself may not directly attract global businesses, some of my friends in the business sector decided to open branches in China after visiting the country as tourists and experiencing its high-potential markets first-hand,” said McLean, who is also Chairman of the China UK Business Development Center, as reported by the China Daily.

LOGISTICS

Chinese shipping companies showing interest in the Arctic shipping route



Chinese companies are showing growing interest in shipping goods to the West via the Northern Sea Route

(NSR) – an icy Arctic passage that opens up each summer – according to Rosatom, the Russian company that operates infrastructure along the route. The firm anticipates a significant increase in voyages by Chinese companies along the NSR during the coming summer-autumn shipping season, and is adding more nuclear-powered icebreakers to its fleet to handle the growing traffic flow. Cargo traffic on the NSR – the shortest shipping link between the Asia-Pacific region and western Eurasia – is steadily increasing, Rosatom told the South China Morning Post. **In 2024, a record 92 transit voyages were completed, carrying more than 3 million tons of cargo.** “In 2025, companies from China plan to make at least one and a half times more trips along the NSR than last year,” Rosatom said, though it did not provide specific numbers for Chinese companies’ voyages.

Cargo data showed that Russia's energy exports to China currently dominate transit shipping along the NSR, with 95% of all transit shipments moving from Russia to China in 2024, according to the Center for High North Logistics, an Arctic transport institute affiliated with Norway's Nord University. Crude oil remained the main cargo, accounting for 1.89 million tons of goods shipped along the route last year. Bulk commodities such as iron ore, coal and fertilizer made up the second-largest cargo source, with 877,000 tons. The main cargo being shipped from China to Russia, meanwhile, included auto parts, construction equipment and materials, passenger cars, clothing, footwear and chemical products. Rosatom, which operates the world's only fleet of nuclear-powered icebreakers, plans to add another four vessels to escort ships along the Arctic passage, bringing its total fleet to 12.

Russia continues to promote the potential of **the NSR – allowing to cut Asia-Europe transit times by up to 40%** – but progress on developing the route has slowed since the start of the war in Ukraine, which triggered a wave of Western sanctions targeting Russia. In March, Russian President Vladimir Putin told the International Arctic Forum that Russia would “consolidate our leadership in this sector by building new-generation icebreakers, including nuclear icebreakers”. He also dismissed concerns over some Western countries withdrawing cooperation on Arctic issues, saying: “Don’t do it if you don’t want it. We will work with those who want it.” He pointed to China, Belarus and

the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as examples of countries continuing to show a “keen interest” in developing Arctic transport. However, China-Russia cooperation on the route remains limited in reality, according to Gorild Heggelund, Research Professor at Norway's Fridtjof Nansen Institute. “Currently, projects along the NSR have not materialized despite fine speeches from the two countries' leaders. Reasons may be a lack of trust between the nations on lower levels as well as economic profitability,” she said.

The NSR requires significant investment to build and upgrade ports and related infrastructure, but Chinese stakeholders appear to be losing belief in its economic potential, especially due to concerns over secondary sanctions, she noted. Chinese state-owned shipping company COSCO halted sailings along the NSR after Western countries introduced Russian sanctions in 2022. Currently, only a few smaller, privately-owned Chinese shipping firms continue to use the route. But there may be an increase in activity and investment in the coming years, with China and Russia establishing a sub-commission focusing on NSR development last August, Heggelund said.

The NSR could be strategically important to China as an alternative shipping route, but it is unlikely to become a major shipping lane due to the harsh natural conditions and weak port infrastructure, according to a Chinese maritime scholar, as reported by the South China Morning Post.

INNOVATION

Innovation ecosystem in Suzhou's Wujiang district evolving rapidly



At the heart of China's Yangtze River Delta region, there is a place where the elegance of a traditional water town coexists with the pulse of cutting-edge innovation. In **Wujiang district of Suzhou, Jiangsu province**, one can stroll along ancient canals flanked by white-walled houses and arched stone bridges before **enjoying an “afternoon tea party” with an advanced humanoid robot in a Suzhou garden, using a sophisticated 3D printed tea set and wearing a UV-protective jacket that are all developed by local tech heavyweights.** This unlikely fusion of heritage and high tech is just one striking example of how technological ingenuity can quietly

reshape the future. Inside **ZRapid Tech's 3D printing technology factory**, an intricate model of a miniature city is on display as a showcase of what's possible with **advanced metal 3D printing**. “Some parts of the model's finest parts are just 0.1 mm, barely visible to the human eye or camera, yet fully formed with 3D printing,” said Xing Zhanwen, the company's Deputy General Manager. “Our printing precision now reaches 0.02 mm, finer than a strand of hair, leading the industry in this field.”

Besides the sophisticated metal printing technology, ZRapid Tech has also achieved another milestone in resin 3D printing, and it is all developed in-house. “We've created one of the world's fastest and largest 3D photopolymerization printing systems, capable of producing objects up to 2.7 meters in size,” Xing said, adding that the technology is already being applied in home appliances, high-speed railways, construction and other sectors. With more than 150 patents and a complete industrial chain covering materials from polymers to metals and ceramics, the Wujiang-based tech company has spent the past 14 years leading the field in additive manufacturing. Xing attributed the company's continued innovation to its R&D-driven approach, with nearly 40% of its staff engaged in R&D and related expenses accounting for 13% of annual revenue. “Wujiang's location in the heart

of the Yangtze River Delta region gives us easy access to talent, capital and application scenarios. It's a natural fit for the expansion of high-end manufacturing like 3D printing," Xing said.

With a population of over 1.5 million, **Wujiang is now home to more than 100,000 private enterprises**, including two that have broken into the Fortune Global 500. As Wujiang's innovation ecosystem continues to evolve, it is now **home to 77 national-level "little giant" tech enterprises** specializing in niche and advanced technologies. The district's total R&D expenditure was estimated to account for about 4.15% of its GDP last year. Wujiang's spirit of innovation extends beyond 3D printing. Following robot technology company Leju Robot's launch of its first humanoid robot production line in Wujiang late last year, the first of its kind in Jiangsu, the company said it plans to continue developing and manufacturing its flagship robots in the district, with full capacity expected within five years. Once scaled, the line is expected to generate an annual output value of CNY300 million. Among China's first batch of open-source HarmonyOS-based humanoid robots capable of traversing complex terrain, Leju's KUAVO series is able to realize intelligent deployment across diverse real-world scenarios. With the successful delivery of its 100th full-size humanoid robot this January, Leju now leads the world in both quantity and diversity of real-world humanoid robot deployments. In addition, its KUAVO robots are also operating stably on factory lines such as at Chinese car brand Hongqi, further bridging the gap between robotics R&D and industrial application.

According to Xu Tianshu, Professor at Suzhou University of Science and Technology's Business School, private enterprises are key players in driving innovation, and those of different sizes play varying roles along the industrial chain. "While large firms often take the lead in breakthrough innovation, smaller and medium-sized ones can focus on their core strengths and contribute essential specialization and support services to major enterprises, large-scale projects and entire industrial chains," Xu said. As of the end of September 2024, the total number of private-sector market entities in China reached 180.86 million, accounting for 96.37% of all market entities and marking a year-on-year increase of 3.93%. The private sector serves as "capillaries" of China's industrial and supply chains, playing a vital role in stabilizing growth, employment and livelihoods, said Zhang Daoyang, a senior official at the State Administration of Market Regulation (SAMR).

In the Wujiang High-tech Zone of Shengze, which has long been known as China's traditional silk hub, innovation is now also prominent. At the display area of local textile firm Lixintex, rows of self-developed high-performance textiles are neatly arranged. The company's latest sun-protective fabric uses an innovative weave of nylon, spandex and enhanced polyester to achieve both UV resistance and breathability, a useful dual-performance innovation for summer weather. "With an ultraviolet protection factor rating of 50+, the fabric blocks over 95% of UV rays, while the ultra-fine yarn and special weaving technique ensure it remains light and airy," said Luan Yong, the company's R&D Director, as reported by the China Daily.

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CHINA NEWS ROUND-UP

China and U.S. set up framework to implement trade consensus

China and the United States have mapped out a framework to implement their consensus and bring bilateral trade ties to the right track after concluding two days of "candid and in-depth" talks in London, which analysts said would help de-escalate tensions between the world's two largest economies. While it might still require some patience before a final agreement is reached, analysts said the talks were a good sign of steadying bilateral ties and injecting much-needed certainty into the world economy. He Lifeng, Chinese Vice Premier and lead person for China-U.S. economic and trade affairs, said the U.S. should resolve trade disputes with China through equal dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation. During the talks in London, the two delegations reached an agreement in principle on implementing the important consensus reached by Presidents Trump and Xi during their phone call on June 5

and the trade talks held last month in Geneva, Switzerland, when the U.S. and China reached a 90-day truce in their tariff escalations.

However, since the talks in Geneva, the White House announced new non-tariff restrictions, including stopping sales of computer chip design software to China, warning against using chips made by Chinese tech company Huawei, and canceling visas for Chinese students. Ahead of the meeting in London, the **Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said it had approved some applications for rare earth export licenses**. Vice Premier He noted that the essence of China-U.S. economic and trade relations is mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. Cooperation in economy and trade brings benefits to both sides, while conflict hurts them both, He said, stressing that there are no winners in a trade war, and China does not wish to engage in one, but neither does it fear doing so.

The U.S. should work with China to honor its words with actions, and demonstrate sincerity in keeping commitments

and concrete efforts to implement consensus, so as to jointly safeguard the hard-won outcomes of dialogue, He said. The two sides should maintain communication and consultation, and steer China-U.S. economic and trade relations toward steady and sustained development, in order to inject more certainty and stability into the world economy, He added. The positive sentiments among Chinese and U.S. negotiators point to a shared willingness to keep the trade talks afloat and strive for a comprehensive agreement that benefits both economies and the world at large, the China Daily reports.

China-EU trade up 2.9% year-on-year in first five months

The EU remained China's second-largest trading partner in the first five months of 2025, with trade totaling CNY2.3 trillion, up 2.9% year-on-year and accounting for 12.8% of China's total, according to China's General Administration of Customs. China's exports to the EU reached CNY1.57 trillion, a 7.7% increase, while imports stood at CNY728.33 billion, down 6.1% year-on-year. Despite some headwinds, experts said that the figures reflect the strong resilience of China-EU economic relations, as the two sides share a high degree of complementarity and have developed a deeply symbiotic relationship over the years. They said that China-EU economic and trade relations have become an important source of stability for both sides at a time of rising uncertainty in the global economy and international trade.

Cui Hongjian, Director of the Department of European Studies at the China Institute of International Studies, told the Global Times that despite some difficulties in China-EU relations in recent years, the latest Customs data reflects strong resilience in bilateral economic ties. "These challenges must also be understood in the broader context of a sluggish global trade environment, which has been weighed down by geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainty," he noted. "Both China and the EU are likely to place even greater emphasis on bilateral economic ties, particularly the EU, which increasingly recognizes the significance of its economic relationship with China for its own development," Zhang Jian, Vice President of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, told the Global Times. Cui noted that European businesses – driven by market demand and economic pragmatism – continue to pursue more cooperation opportunities with their Chinese counterparts, as many Chinese and European enterprises are part of the same industrial chains.

China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said in a statement that the Chinese side and the EU held focused, candid, and in-depth discussions on urgent and important issues during Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao's meeting with EU Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maros Sefcovic in France on June 3. The issues included the EU's anti-subsidy probe into Chinese electric vehicles (EVs), China's anti-dumping probe into EU brandy, and export controls. Both sides called on their working teams to intensify efforts in preparing for this year's major China-EU economic and trade agenda.

Regarding EVs, the price commitment negotiations between China and the EU have entered the final stage, though further efforts are still required from both parties, according to the statement. As for the brandy case, the statement noted that French companies and associations have submitted a price undertaking application to China and reached an agreement on core terms with the Chinese investigation authority. The Chinese side is reviewing the full text and plans to issue a final ruling, including the price undertaking, by July 5 if approved, the Global Times reports.

China's NEV exports continue to surge, increasing 80.9% in May

China's new-energy vehicle (NEV) exports continued to surge in May, as the NEV sector's economy of scale further manifested itself, along with an expanding global footprint of Chinese auto brands, with their international recognition steadily growing. **NEV exports reached 200,000 units in May, surging 80.9% year-on-year,** according to the China Passenger Car Association (CPCA). For the January-May period, the increase was 37.1% as the total number of exports reached 789,000 units. The May figure was up 5.8% month-on-month. NEV exports in May accounted for 44.5% of all cars exported, up 16.6 percentage points compared with the same period last year. May NEV exports were driven by brands including BYD, Chery, Tesla China, SAIC Motor and Geely, according to the report. BYD was the top exporter with 84,068 cars shipped. U.S. auto brand Tesla exported 23,074 units from its production base in China, the CPCA report showed.

"Chinese brands have been diversifying their overseas markets to reduce reliance on just a few markets, and have achieved notable success in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Latin America," Bian Yongzu, Executive Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Modernization of Management Magazine, told the Global Times. The CPCA report noted that despite recent external disruptions, exports of domestic plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) to developing countries are growing rapidly with bright prospects. PHEVs made up 32% of all NEV exports in May, compared with 18.5% last year. From January to April, China accounted for 68% of the world's NEV sales growth, with a total of 5.97 million units sold in the period, the report said. With the domestic and overseas markets combined, **NEV sales in the first five months of this year reached 4.35 million units, up 34.1%.**

In the period, China's exports of mechanical and electrical products increased by 9.3% year-on-year to CNY6.4 trillion, accounting for 60% of the country's total goods exports. EVs were among the leading products, with a rise of 19% year-on-year, the Global Times reports.

China's rare earth exports increase 23% from April to May

China's exports of rare earths in May increased by 23% from April to 5,864.60 tons, with total exports from January to May growing by 2.3% year-on-year to 24,827 tons, according to China's General Administration of Customs (GAC). The export volumes remain normal,

and align with the country's foreign trade policy and the recent policies of relevant departments to meet global rare-earth demand, Wu Chenhui, an independent analyst who closely follows the critical minerals industry, told the Global Times. China's regulatory measures on rare earths fully comply with international norms, Wang Guoqing, Research Director at the Beijing Lange Steel Information Research Center, told the Global Times. As a critical resource with both military and civilian applications, rare earths are widely used in strategic sectors such as lasers, radar, new energy, and aerospace, Wang said, adding that many countries, including the EU and the U.S., similarly designate them as key assets for protection and China's approach is both justified and necessary.

China said it was willing to speed up the approval process for rare earth magnets to Europe with a "green channel." In response to questions on whether there are plans to open more green channels for other countries, including the U.S., Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian referred specific questions to competent authorities. According to a MOFCOM statement, Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao said that China is willing to establish a green channel for eligible applications to accelerate approvals for rare-earth exports, while instructing working-level teams to maintain timely communication.

A MOFCOM spokesperson responded to concerns over China's export controls on rare earths in a separate statement, stating that China enforces export controls on rare earths and related items according to the law to better safeguard its national security and interests, as well as to fulfill international obligations such as non-proliferation. This reflects China's consistent stance on upholding world peace and regional stability, the spokesperson said. He noted that as a responsible country, China fully considers the legitimate needs and concerns of other nations. It reviews export license applications for rare earths and related items in line with laws and regulations, has approved a number of compliant applications, and will continue to strengthen the approval process for such applications, the Global Times reports.

Chinese electric van maker Miraco eyeing European market

Miraco Motor, a commercial-vehicle subsidiary of China's state-owned carmaker GAC Group has its sights set on Europe, where it hopes its electric vans can lure corporate buyers away from petroleum-powered models built by the likes of Ford and Stellantis. Xiao Ning, CEO of Miraco Motor, told the South China Morning Post that the company would launch its first model in Europe next year. It aims to grab 10% of the European market, where more than 1.7 million vehicles of this type are sold each year for public transport, goods delivery, emergency services and commuting. "Electric commercial vehicles have an overwhelming advantage over petrol rivals because of electricity's lower cost than gasoline," he said. "Our van will compete against six to seven rivals there, and we think it's reasonable to target a 10% share."

Established in late 2023 and based, like GAC, in

Guangzhou, Guangdong province, the company displayed its prototype models in Hong Kong at the International Automotive & Supply Chain Expo, which ended on June 15. Miraco's battery-powered vans can go as far as 350 km on a single charge. Xiao said the company also planned to offer autonomous-driving systems so that its vans could vie for a share of the robotaxi industry around the world. The company uses a modular design that separates the drivetrain components from the cabin and cargo areas, to make it easier to spin out new models. Its first production model, a minibus, would hit the Hong Kong market this year, he said.

Unlike Chinese-made battery-powered electric vehicles (EVs) for passenger use, which are subject to up to 45.3% additional tariffs in the European Union, **commercial vehicles assembled in China do not face trade barriers in the EU.**

Miraco has partnered with Flynt, a European electric-van developer, to crack the market, Xiao said. The two will co-design products that Miraco will build, with Flynt selling the vehicles and providing after-sales service. "With Flynt's ability to serve the European market, our tie-up could make our vans more competitive in the market," he added. "We want to serve as the vanguard for GAC as the group revs up its internationalization." GAC aimed to export 500,000 vehicles by 2027, nearly quadruple the volume of 12,700 units last year, according to General Manager Feng Xingya. GAC, the Chinese partner of Toyota and Honda, also owns factories in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, the South China Morning Post reports.

Chinese online retailers expanding in Europe

Chinese online retailers are expanding in Europe to attract new customers and increase sales, as cross-border e-commerce is contributing to the growth of China's foreign trade amid external uncertainties. Eyeing the growing demand for online shopping in European countries, particularly among younger shoppers, Chinese e-commerce players are providing cost-effective products to local consumers by leveraging efficient logistics and supply chain networks to mitigate tariff pressures from the United States. AliExpress, Alibaba Group's cross-border e-commerce platform, recently opened its services to local merchants in Poland. AliExpress said some local merchants can enjoy benefits like zero deposit and commission-free services for the first three months, and directly sell their products to consumers from Poland and countries around the world. AliExpress and Polish online shopping platform Allegro are the two most popular e-commerce platforms in Poland, the largest e-commerce market in Central and Eastern Europe. To better support the operations of local merchants, AliExpress has partnered with more than 10 leading overseas warehouse service providers to roll out "certified warehouses" covering the United States, Spain, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Poland. The certified warehouses will provide faster deliveries and smoother shopping experiences for overseas buyers.

According to global research firm Statista, the revenue of Europe's e-commerce market is expected to reach

USD707.9 billion in 2025, with a compound annual growth rate of 7.95%, and the figure is expected to increase to USD961.27 billion by 2029. Hong Yong, Associate Research Fellow at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, said that “as European consumers have shown surging demand for online purchasing in the post-pandemic era, Chinese e-commerce platforms could further expand their footprint there by offering commodities with high cost-effectiveness and localized operation and services,” Hong said.

Temu, a cross-border e-commerce app owned by Chinese online discounter PDD Holdings, is expanding its presence in European countries in an attempt to diversify its customer base. According to Consumer Edge, Temu’s growth in the European Union surged more than 60% year-on-year in early May, with France leading at nearly 100% growth. **TikTok Shop, the e-commerce marketplace of popular short-video app TikTok**, which is owned by ByteDance, has made inroads into Europe with its rollout in Germany, France and Italy. Meanwhile, Chinese cross-border e-commerce platforms are facing mounting regulatory challenges. The EU is planning to levy a €2 handling fee for low-value small packages coming into the bloc, mainly from China. Cui Lili, Professor of Digital Economy at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, said Chinese e-tailers should have a deep understanding of relevant laws, regulations and quality standards in foreign countries, and adjust supply chains to make products that meet local requirements, the China Daily reports.

World's first 4S store for humanoid robots to open in Beijing

The world’s first 4S store for humanoid intelligent robots will open in Yizhuang, Beijing, during the 2025 World Robot Conference, which is scheduled to take place on August 8-12. A “4S store” refers to an authorized dealership integrating sales, service, spare parts and survey – a format that has become the standard in the country’s automotive sector. “The innovative platform will establish a service system covering the entire lifecycle of robots, reshape the industry value chain with a new model, and set a benchmark for industry development,” said Liang Liang, Deputy Director of the Management Committee of the Beijing Economic-Technological Development Area (BETDA). Fueled by breakthroughs in artificial intelligence (AI) and motion control, the global humanoid robot market is projected to surpass CNY1 trillion within the next three years. Applications are expected to expand from industrial manufacturing to commercial services and domestic use, Liang said. He added that the store will strengthen the local robotics ecosystem in Yizhuang, enhancing industrial clustering and innovation.

Traditional fragmented sales and service models can no longer meet enterprises’ growing needs for technology validation, scenario adaptation, and full lifecycle operation and maintenance, said Wang Yifan, Deputy General Manager of Beijing Yizhuang Robot Technology Industry Development Co. **The new 4S store will integrate robot sales, spare parts supply, after sales service and customer feedback to build an end-to-end service**

system and enable more efficient supply-demand connections, he said. The store will feature scenario-based displays, immersive interactions, standardized delivery and after-sales services. It will also establish a nationwide rapid-response spare parts network and a professional maintenance team to ensure timely repair, maintenance, assembly and related services.

Backed by Yizhuang’s robust robotics sector and home to Beijing’s first robot industry park, the project has attracted interest across the industry. **More than 100 upstream and downstream enterprises in the robotics supply chain**, including 30 specializing in humanoid robots, **have expressed intentions to join.** At a news conference, 10 leading companies, including the Beijing Humanoid Robot Innovation Center and UBTECH Robotics, signed partnership agreements with the 4S store and may be among the first to set up operations there. “With the upgrading of consumer demand, people’s expectations for humanoid robots are also evolving,” said Ren Haidong, Director of Commerce at High Torque Robotics in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, one of the participating companies. “Robots will become more integrated with diverse real-life scenarios.” Ren added that Yizhuang has offered preferential policies such as discounted rent and guidelines on talent development, which could help companies address challenges related to hiring recent university graduates.

Yizhuang, the permanent venue of the World Robot Conference and a key hub for Beijing’s robotics industry, is now home to more than 300 enterprises in robotics and intelligent manufacturing. The area’s industrial chain has reached a scale of more than CNY10 billion, accounting for about 50% of Beijing’s total robotics sector, the China Daily reports.

China-Europe sci-tech collaboration highlighted at VivaTech 2025 in Paris

China-Europe collaboration in science and technology took center stage at VivaTech 2025 in Paris on June 11, as the China-Europe Science and Technology Innovation and Cooperation Forum opened in tandem with the inauguration of the China Pavilion. Organized by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), the event highlighted the growing momentum behind cross-border collaboration in innovation, research and industrial transformation. “The Chinese government attaches great importance to scientific and technological innovation, placing it at the core of national development,” said Deng Li, Chinese Ambassador to France. “Guided by national strategies, driven by independent innovation of enterprises, and pulled by vast market demand, China has made remarkable progress in science and technology.” Last year, China’s research and development (R&D) investment exceeded CNY3.6 trillion, maintaining the world’s second-highest spending, Deng said.

VivaTech, Europe’s largest annual tech and innovation exhibition, brings together startups, global technology leaders, investors and policymakers to explore cutting-edge solutions and foster international cooperation. Li Wenguo, CCPIT Deputy General Representative in

France, said the China Pavilion features leading Chinese tech companies including Huawei, Unitree Robotics and Dahua Technology. The exhibits spotlight advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, smart mobility and digital infrastructure – technologies that have attracted considerable attention from attendees and industry professionals. Caroline Penard, General Manager of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China, said the forum and the pavilion “perfectly embody our shared commitment to strengthening synergies between France, Europe and China”. She described innovation as a “lever of competitiveness and a common language” that unites the two economies. The Chamber represents more than 2,200 French companies active in China, she said. “Together, we can build an ambitious future, founded on boldness, excellence and mutual trust.”

Representing VivaTech, Nicolas Douchement, Chief Business and Experience Officer, described the presence

of the CCPIT as a “historic first” for the exhibition. “This moment marks more than just a debut,” he said. “It symbolizes a shared ambition: to build stronger technological and entrepreneurial bridges between China and Europe, in the spirit of open innovation, dialogue and collaboration.” Speakers at the forum emphasized that cooperation is already taking shape on multiple fronts.

Liu Jiandong, Chairman of the China Chamber of Commerce to the European Union and Chairman of Bank of China (Europe), said Chinese institutions have taken part in about 300 joint projects under the EU’s Horizon 2020 program, involving more than 600 researchers. “These joint efforts are advancing frontier science. They also contribute to the global public good by tackling shared challenges through open and inclusive innovation,” he said. Liu also highlighted strong bilateral scientific collaboration with France with nearly 20 joint laboratories in different fields, the China Daily reports.

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